



Australian Government



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

MEKONG NETWORK TO COUNTER
TRANSNATIONAL CRIME (MNET-CTC)
GRANTS

GLOBAL INITIATIVE AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME (GI-TOC)

2025



Grant opportunity timeline	
Grant opportunity phase	Expected dates
Opening solicitation period:	1 November 2025 – 30 November 2025
Evaluation period:	1 December 2025 – 15 January 2026
Implementation period:	February 2026 – February 2027
Contact information and submission	
For full information about this grants opportunity, interested applicants should contact: Tyler Esch, Grants and Resilience Officer, tyler.esch@globalinitiative.net and CC Kristina Amerhauser, Senior Analyst, Kristina.Amerhauser@globalinitiative.net If you have any questions, contact: Tyler Esch, Grants and Resilience Officer, tyler.esch@globalinitiative.net and CC Kristina Amerhauser, Senior Analyst, Kristina.Amerhauser@globalinitiative.net Submit your application to before the 1 November 2025 deadline to Tyler Esch, Grants and Resilience Officer, tyler.esch@globalinitiative.net and CC Kristina Amerhauser, Senior Analyst, Kristina.Amerhauser@globalinitiative.net	

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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: MNET-CTC GRANTS

The challenge

The Mekong region, which includes Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam is subject to pervasive vulnerabilities as a result of organized crime. The region hosts a diverse number of criminal markets, including drug trafficking, financial crimes and child sexual exploitation, as well as a wide range of criminal actors that cause severe impacts on evolving patterns of security, governance, climate change and development. The threats have permeated democratic institutions, the economy and society, they are directly harming individuals and communities in the region and are spreading globally.

Tackling organized crime and corruption requires holistic responses that include the participation of the government, private sector actors and civil society. Organized crime thrives where there is vulnerability, and civil society plays an important role in reducing vulnerabilities by strengthening local resilience. Civil society can help understand how different forms of organized crime are part of local culture and impact local lives.

There is increasing global awareness of the role that civil society organizations can play in supporting government responses to tackling transnational crime, increasing institutional accountability and providing services when criminality impacts communities. Civil society can leverage multi-stakeholder networks, build bridges and trust between governments and communities and harness grassroots power to strengthen and expand communal resilience.

Across the Mekong, civil society actors already foster safer and more prosperous communities. We want to support and promote community resilience initiatives that work to reduce organized crime and corruption – for example, by working with community-based organizations supporting youth, drug issues, post-prison reintegration, anti-corruption, environmental issues, marginalized groups or on violence against women.

The MNET-CTC Grants

In 2025, the GI-TOC partnered with the Australian Government to establish the Mekong Network to Counter Transnational Crime (MNET-CTC) dedicated to enhancing local capacity, collating and producing analysis and information and building local and regional networks and partnerships that develop resilience and galvanize responses to organized crime and subsequently raise awareness of the Mekong through inclusion in global debates.

As part of the MNET-CTC programme, the GI-TOC seeks organizations and actors locally embedded in communities and networks affected by, and at risk of, criminality in the Mekong. For example, this may include non-profit and non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, media organizations and journalists, women and youth collectives, faith-based organizations, and regional associations with programmatic overlaps to organized crime issues.

The GI-TOC calls upon these organizations to propose novel and innovative projects that respond to and prevent organized crime in the Mekong. Through this MNET-CTC Resilience Fund grant opportunity, the GI-TOC seeks to enhance local capacity and bolster community resilience across the Mekong region and support communities to respond to emerging priorities. The grantees will be expected to embrace their connections and community resources to target responses, strengthen networking and maximize impact.

The GI-TOC invites proposals featuring creative responses to issues with links to organized crime, which may include, investigations, capacity building and trainings, youth prevention programs, early warning systems,

projects expanding economic and educational opportunities, reintegration and resocializations programs, awareness raising activities, and/or advocacy raising activities, among other ideas.

Available funding:

The grants facility will provide fixed grant amounts (i.e., milestone based) of between AUD10 000 - AUD30 000.

Geographical focus:

The primary focus countries are Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. Applications that cover Myanmar¹ and/or are proposed by Myanmar civil society organizations will also be considered.

Timeframe of the grant:

One year (12 months) grant period from approx. February 2026 to February 2027

Target applicants for grants:

- Non-profit and non-governmental organizations,
- Community-based organizations,
- Media organizations and journalists,
- Women and youth collectives,
- Faith-based organizations,
- Regional associations with programmatic overlaps to organized crime issues.

This list is not exhaustive. Applications from other organizations may be considered – please see the eligibility criteria below.

Programme themes:

Criminal markets in the Mekong subregion are numerous, significant in scale and scope, and organized by many different sets of interconnected criminal actors. Across the Mekong, the GI-TOC has recorded high levels of penetration of drug markets; along with large numbers of sexually exploited children; as well as cybercrimes and financial crimes also playing a significant role. This is complicated further by an entrenched mesh of criminal actors, including state-embedded actor, private sector actors and enablers; as well as a significant presence of foreign criminal actors across the region.

The MNET-CTC program will consider projects that seek to respond to and address organized crime in the Mekong, including but not limited to drug trafficking, financial crime and child sexual exploitation. Programming will also focus on all types of activities that build resilience to cross-cutting drivers and enablers of organized crime more generally.

Eligible activities:

To be eligible for an MNET-CTC Resilience Fund grant, applicants must propose activities clearly linking their organization's work and mission to preventing or responding to organized crime. Proposals should include activities that are innovative, test and trial new ideas or approaches and/or seek to build a community of practice responding to organized in their communities. They may include:

¹ Myanmar engagement is to be consistent with Australian Government policy and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, should operating context allow.

- Researching, monitoring, documenting, reporting, investigating, mapping, data storytelling, and/or fact-finding on organized crime issues to increase knowledge-base and/or institutional transparency and accountability;
- Networking events, trainings and/or capacity development sessions for target beneficiaries to synergize thematic engagement on organized crime;
- Targeted policy and advocacy campaigns, including mobilisation efforts, to increase civil society participation, victim participation and marginalised persons' perspectives in national and international decision-making processes;
- Crime prevention activities with at risk communities, including workshops, social events, trainings, youth groups, (re)integration programs and marginalised persons' initiatives to reenforce positive social roles and participation in legal markets;
- Awareness raising and developing due diligence, risk mitigation and early warning systems to bolster the resilience of communities to identify and withstand criminality.

Deadline for applying:

30 November 2025 for submission of the pre-application questionnaire. Further details about the application process are provided below.

Eligibility criteria:

To be eligible organizations and/or individuals must:

- Be a legal entity, or hold a legal identification document, with the capacity to enter into a legally binding agreement or contract;
- Demonstrate prior interest and/or experience implementing activities directly addressing issues related to organized crime in the Mekong, such as illicit drug markets, financial crime, child sexual exploitation and/or cross-cutting drivers and enablers illicit economies; and
- Speak English and/or at least one regional language.

Application guidelines and timings:

- Please visit our website to view the full details of the call for proposals.
- If you believe your organization is eligible for a grant, please request the pre-application questionnaire to Tyler Esch, Grants and Resilience Officer, tyler.esch@globalinitiative.net and CC Kristina Amerhauser, Senior Analyst, Kristina.Amerhauser@globalinitiative.net.
- Your pre-application questionnaire will be assessed by the MNET-CTC review panel against eligibility criteria. If your pre-application meets these criteria, you will be sent the full proposal template and detailed requirements. You will then be required to submit a full proposal.
- If your proposal progresses to the next phase, our review panel will provide feedback and initiate a background and risk assessment process.
- The final stage involves an internal grant committee review. Grants will be approved following this review process, which may take several months from the time you submit your pre-application questionnaire (please refer to the timetable below).

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Thank you for your interest in the MNET-CTC Grant process!